



Antikythera mechanism (analog computer) identified by Archaeologist Valerios Stais - May 17, 1902

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General Note



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The Antikythera mechanism is an ancient mechanical analog computer designed to calculate astronomical positions and eclipses. It was discovered by Valerios Stais on May 17, 1902.

The Antikythera mechanism was discovered in 45 meters of water in the Antikythera shipwreck off Point Glyphadia on the Greek island of Antikythera. The wreck was found in April 1900 by a group of Greek sponge divers, who retrieved numerous artifacts, including bronze and marble statues, pottery, unique glassware, jewellery, coins, and the mechanism. All were transferred to the National Museum of Archaeology in Athens for storage and analysis. On 17th May 1902, archaeologist Valerios Stais was examining the finds and noticed that one of the pieces of rock had a gear wheel embedded in it. Stais initially believed it was an astronomical clock, but most scholars considered the device to be *prochronistic*, too complex to have been constructed during the same period as the other pieces that had been discovered. The Antikythera mechanism is one of the world's oldest known geared devices. It has puzzled and intrigued historians of science and technology since its discovery.

